



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

- A corn is a thickening (bump) of the outer skin layer, usually over bony areas such as toe joints.
- A callus is a painless thickening of skin caused by repeated pressure or irritation. Corns affect toe joints and skin between toes while a callus can appear on any part of the body, especially hands, feet or knees, that endures repeated pressure or irritation.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Corn: A small, tender and painful raised bump on the side or over the joint of a toe. Corns are usually 3 mm to 10 mm in diameter and have a hard center.
- Callus: A rough, thickened area of skin that appears after repeated pressure or irritation.

CAUSES

Corns and calluses form to protect a skin area from injury caused by repeated irritation (rubbing or squeezing). Pressure causes cells in the irritated area to grow at a faster rate, leading to overgrowth.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- Shoes that fit poorly.
- Those with occupations that involve pressure on the hands or knees, such as carpenters, writers, guitar players or tile layers.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- Don't wear shoes that fit poorly.
- Avoid activities that create constant pressure on specific skin areas.
- When possible, wear protective gear, such as gloves or knee pads.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Usually curable if the underlying cause can be removed. Allow 3 weeks for recovery. Recurrence is likely even with treatment if the cause is not removed.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

Back, hip, knee or ankle pain caused by a change in one's gait due to severe discomfort.



TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- Remove the source of pressure, if possible. Discard ill-fitting shoes.
- Use corn and callus pads to reduce pressure on irritated areas.
- Peel or rub the thickened area with a pumice stone to remove it. Don't cut it with a razor. Soak the area in warm water to soften it before peeling.
- Ask the shoe repairman to sew a metatarsal bar onto your shoe to use while a corn is healing.
- Surgery is rarely used. It does not remove the cause, and post-surgical scarring is painful and may complicate healing.

MEDICATIONS

- After peeling the upper layers of the corn once or twice a day, apply a non-prescription 5% or 10% salicylic ointment. Cover with adhesive tape.
- A corn or callus may rarely be injected with cortisone medicine to suppress inflammation or pain.

ACTIVITY

Resume your normal activities as soon as symptoms improve.

DIET

No special diet.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You or a family member has corns or calluses that persist, despite self-treatment.
- Any signs of infection, such as redness, swelling, pain, heat or tenderness, develop around a corn or callus.